

TORRES, Amadeu / ASSUNÇÃO, Carlos (ed.) (2000): OLIVEIRA, Fernando de (1536): *Gramática da Linguagem Portuguesa*. Lisbon: Academia de Ciências de Lisboa, p. 339. [Edição crítica, semidiplomática e anastática com um estudo introdutório do Eugenio Coseriu].

Over four and a half centuries after its publication, scholars finally have access to Fernão de Oliveira's *Grammatica da Lingoagem Portuguesa* in a volume that combines a critical edition, a semidiplomatic edition, and a facsimile of the original published in 1536. Prefaced (ix-xii) by J. V. de Pina Martins, President of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon, this work opens with a tripartite introduction. Section A, "Abordagem pontual e situacional" (3-26), includes a biographical note (12-15), an annotated bibliography of Oliveira's works, and a general commentary on his *Gramática* (17-26). Section B, "Apreciação global" (29-60), includes an essay by Eugenio Coseriu, "Língua e funcionalidade em Fernão de Oliveira." After highlighting Oliveira's view of what we now know as phonetics and phonology (twenty four out of the *Gramática*'s fifty chapters are about speech sounds), Coseriu rates Oliveira's ideas on word formation as "a primeira teoria da composição das palavras... na história da lingüística românica" (45). Section C ("A nossa edição," 61-77) evaluates the preceding editions and explains the transcription norms adopted. There follow the *Edição crítica* (79-159), the *Edição semidiplomática* (161-237) and the *Edição Anastática* (239-316).

Reading the critical edition is facilitated by writing out abbreviations and transcribing instances of tilde as *m* or *n* as required by orthographic norms. Other user-friendly features include uniform capitalization of names, use of plain *c* instead of *ç* before *e* and *i*, and accents (lacking in the original) where needed to avoid ambiguities, as in crasis (*a + a > à*, *a + as > às*, *a + o > ô*, mod. *ao*) or in archaic proparoxytone verb forms such as *dáremos* or *podéremos* (mod. *darmos*, *pudermos*). The forty-six endnotes (156-159) are particularly enlightening. Replicating the pagination of the original text in the critical and semidiplomatic editions facilitates navigating among the three texts to compare issues and the solutions. Besides a general index (337-339), which some readers might have preferred to see at the front of the volume, there are a subject index (319-322) and an onomastic index (323-335). Copyediting is careful and the few minor typos (e.g., *conjungações* for *conjugações* (151), *ter-se-à* for *ter-se-á* (159), or *nestroutos* for *nestoutros* (126)) do not mar the quality of presentation. Finally, the aesthetically pleasing quality of the printing —250 mm × 180 mm size, strong bond opaque paper, 14 point font in the introduction and semidiplomatic edition, 12 point font in the critical edition, and a very clear facsimile text (155 mm × 105 mm)— makes handling the book particularly gratifying.

A comparison with its predecessors shows that Torres and Assunção's edition is clearly the most thorough to date. The earliest was the *Grammatica de Linguagem Portuguesa por Fernão d'Oliveira. Segunda edição* [the original being considered the first], *conforme a de 1536*, edited by the Visconde d'Azevedo and Tito de Noronha (Porto: Imprensa Portuguesa, 1871). This edition, essentially a transcription from the princeps text, lacks a critical component and, according to Torres and Assunção, is marred by "falhas e imperfeições" (64). The next effort, *Grammatica da Lingoagem Portuguesa por Fernão de Oliveira*, was directed by Rodrigo de Sá Nogueira and edited Aníbal Ferreira Henriques (Lisbon: José Fernandes Júnior, Tipografia Beleza, 1933). It includes an errata list (119-123) of the Azevedo & Noronha edition as well as a useful glossary in which, however, Torres and Assunção detect "múltiplas deficiências" (65). The next edition, *A "Grammatica" de Fernão d'Oliveira. Apreciação – Texto Reproduzido do da 1ª edição, (1536)*, was edited by Olmar Guterres da Silveira (Rio de Janeiro: Jornal do Commercio / Rodrigues & Cia, 1954). A note states that this work was intended as a "thesis presented for an examination for a chair of Portuguese at Colégio Pedro II" (3) in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>1</sup> It includes photostats (between

1. Presenting a philologically oriented thesis as part of the exams for a tenured teaching position at that secondary school was a requirement until relatively recently.

pages 38 and 39) of the first four pages of the original, a biographical note (11-17), under eleven pages (19-29) of commentary, and an unannotated transcription of the text. The next edition was *A Gramática da Linguagem Portuguesa*, by Fernão de Oliveira [with] “Introdução, leitura atualizada e notas” by Maria Leonor Carbalhão Buescu (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional / Casa da Moeda, 1975). This edition, clearly didactic in scope and intended to be “acessível ao leitor comum” (31), uses contemporary spelling and punctuation and is complemented by eighty endnotes. Although appropriate for an introduction to Oliveira’s work, it is insufficient for further scholarly research.

Given this publication history, the edition under review is particularly timely, for despite its brevity (75 pages), the *Gramática* occupies a unique position in Romance and Portuguese philology, and the editors go so far as to claim that in Portugal “antecedentemente a Fernão de Oliveira existiu apenas a protofilologia” (5). Though it was the first Portuguese grammar published, however, it preceded João de Barros’s *Cartinha para aprender a ler* and *Grammatica da Língua Portuguesa*, respectively, by only three and four years. (Nearly four decades would elapse before publication in 1574 of the new works of significance, namely Pero de Magalhães de Gândavo’s *Regras que Ensinam a Maneira de Escrever* and *Ortografia da Língua Portuguesa*). Nor can it claim to be comprehensive, for whereas its analysis of sounds is extensive, its morphological analysis is limited and the chapter on syntax (Ch. XLIX [Da construção])<sup>2</sup> is less than two pages long. Coseriu suggests that, despite its brevity, this section has the merit of seeking solutions independent from Latin grammar and defining in their own terms the grammatical categories operational in Portuguese (50). A more demanding critic, however, might see it as little more than the announcement of a forthcoming book which, regrettably, seems never to have been published: “da construção ou composição da língua, não dizemos mais, porque temos começada ha obra em que particularmente e com mais comprimento falamos della” (153).

The *Gramática*’s real interest lies, first, in having treated what was then a language of limited scope (Silva Neto (1970: 444) points out that according to the census ordered by King João III, Portugal had only 1,122,000 inhabitants). Despite Portugal’s maritime role, Portuguese had barely begun to project itself beyond its original borders. Nor had it ever played an international role comparable to that of Catalan, which had been used in the *Llibre de Consolat de Mar*, the first medieval compilation of maritime law. Further, with Camões’s *Os Lusíadas* (1572) still nearly four decades away, Portuguese was hardly a vehicle for literary production comparable to that of French, Italian or Spanish.

Second, although Nebrija’s *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1492) presumably inspired Oliveira’s, the latter’s *Gramática* is a rather different book. Oliveira’s primary concern is with speech sounds, and while he refers to these as letters, he demonstrates keen intuition on key notions such as phonemes (Chap. xi, [“Do proprio de cada letra na pronunçiação”]), syllable nuclei (Chap. xix, [“Das sillabas”]), phonotactics (Chaps. xxi, [“Da ordem das letras na sillaba”]) and xxii [“Dos começos das sillabas”]), or the role of stress (Chap. xxviii, [“Do acento”]). The tentativeness of his terminology understandably reflects the doubts of a scholar who realized he was dealing with phenomena for which the Greco-Roman grammatical tradition was only partially appropriate. Finally, Oliveira sensed that language is far from a monolithic phenomenon, for he also noted an understanding of linguistic variation, whether regional (“... os da Beira têm has falas e os d’Alentejo outras. E os homens da Estremadura são diferentes dos d’Antre Douro e Minho...” (131)) or social (“... os cavaleiros... têm huns vocabolos e os lavradores outros, e os cortesãos outros, e os religiosos outros...” (131)). His views thus anticipate sociolinguistic concepts that only in recent decades have been integrated in linguistic analysis. Although scholars such as Coseriu in his introductory essay, or Silva Neto in an earlier brief commentary (1970:491) adumbrated these aspects of Oliveira’s work, a detailed interpretative analysis of its

2. Bracketed chapter titles have been added by the editors.

theoretical underpinnings remains to be done. Torres and Assunção's edition provides a solid foundation for this task.

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#### REFERENCES

SILVA NETO, Serafim da (1970<sup>2</sup>): *História da Língua Portuguesa*. Rio de Janeiro: Livros de Portugal.